

DRAFT

March __, 2013

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Chairman
Committee on the Budget
201 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

As required by Section 301(d) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (P.L. 93-344) and in response to your letter of February 8, 2013, this letter transmits the Views and Estimates of the Committee on Ways and Means on those aspects of the Federal budget for the Fiscal Year 2014 that fall within the Committee's jurisdiction.

The current pace of the economic recovery is insufficient and far too many Americans remain unemployed. As such, the Committee will continue to focus on promoting policies that spur private sector job creation and economic growth. These policies include reforming the tax code to make American employers and workers more competitive, expanding trade especially through providing new opportunities to grow exports of American made goods and services and by reducing the burden placed on American employers by the recent rapid growth in budget deficits, reducing the national debt, and eliminating inefficient and counter-productive government regulation.

I. Legislative Issues with Budgetary Impact

- A. Human Resources – The Committee will work to help more unemployed Americans find jobs by reviewing the operation of current State and Federal unemployment benefits and programs, including the implementation of reforms contained in Public Law 112-96, *The Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012*, and develop improvements as needed. The Committee will continue its effort to improve the exchange of program data to improve administrative efficiency and reduce waste, fraud, and abuse. The Committee will also review the effectiveness of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Child Support Enforcement, and Child Care and Development Block Grant programs to ensure they target those most in need and promote economic mobility through employment. The Committee will also continue its general oversight over the Human Resources programs under its jurisdiction, including reviewing program interactions and eligibility standards. The Committee will also review and act, as appropriate, on proposals in the President's Fiscal Year 2014 Budget upon its release.

- B. Medicare and Other Health Care Issues – The Committee will closely oversee the implementation of the health care overhaul and its impact on federal spending, the economy, those who already have insurance, employers, Medicare beneficiaries, and health care providers. In addition, the Committee will look for ways to reform the Medicare program to ensure its sustainability for current and future beneficiaries. The Committee will also examine policies that reduce the cost of health insurance, increase health care quality and improve outcomes, protect access to care, encourage transparency, and eliminate waste, fraud, and abuse.
- C. Social Security – The Committee will work to strengthen Social Security programs through examining the financing challenges facing Social Security's retirement, survivors and disability programs, with particular focus on the role of Social Security benefits for today's and future beneficiaries, the cost of delay to taxpayers and beneficiaries in addressing those challenges, and proposed solutions. With the disability program also experiencing ongoing management challenges, the Committee will examine the process for both determining eligibility for benefits and the appeals process. In addition, the Committee will examine the agency's deployment of tight resources to serve the public and taxpayers and provide oversight of the management, performance, program stewardship and long-range strategic planning related to Social Security programs. The Committee will also continue to pursue options to better protect individuals, including children, from identity theft related to the proliferation of use and misuse of Social Security numbers.
- D. Tax – The Committee recognizes that a complex, burdensome, anti-growth tax code remains a significant obstacle to economic recovery and job creation. Accordingly, the Committee anticipates continuing its extensive efforts to simplify and reform the tax code for individuals, families, and employers, in order to spur the robust job creation and economic growth necessary to reduce the Nation's persistently high unemployment rate. In so doing, the Committee will build on its record from the 112th Congress, which featured not only more than twenty hearings devoted to tax reform at the Full Committee, the Select Revenue Measures Subcommittee, and the Oversight Subcommittee – including three joint hearings with the Senate Finance Committee – but also the formal release of a discussion draft on international tax reform in October of 2011 (with the release of a second discussion draft, on financial products, earlier this year). In addition, the Committee will continue to review other tax matters and will closely scrutinize the revenue recommendations contained in the President's Fiscal Year 2014 Budget upon its release.
- E. Trade – The Committee seeks to increase economic opportunities for American workers and businesses through the expansion of trade opportunities, adherence to trade agreements and rules by our trading partners and by the United States, and the elimination of foreign trade barriers to our goods and services by opening new markets and by enforcing U.S. rights. The Committee intends to consider legislation to grant authority to the President to negotiate and conclude trade agreements, in consultation with Congress, and to provide a clear framework for Congressional consideration and implementation. The Committee intends to continue work begun in the 112th Congress to pass the Miscellaneous Tariff Bill, a package of

noncontroversial bills to eliminate or reduce duties on products not made in the United States, in accordance with bipartisan transparency guidelines. The Committee will continue work it began in the 112th Congress to consider legislation concerning the budgets and activities of agencies within its jurisdiction, particularly authorization of Customs and Border Protection, together with improvements to streamline and facilitate legitimate and compliant trade at the border, automate CBP processes, and improve enforcement. The Committee will continue its oversight of systemic problems in U.S.-China trade relations, including issues related to China's consistent lack of protection and enforcement of U.S. intellectual property rights, indigenous innovation requirements, use of industrial subsidies, export restraints on key products such as rare earth minerals, and currency misalignment. The Committee will continue its oversight over the Trans-Pacific Partnership negotiations and work with the Administration to develop an action plan for new bilateral, regional, plurilateral, and multilateral trade and investment negotiations, including the International Services Agreement, a U.S./EU free trade agreement, and bilateral investment treaty negotiations. The Committee will continue its oversight responsibilities with respect to the WTO, including U.S. goals, dispute settlement, the prospect for a trade facilitation agreement and expansion of the information technology agreement, and WTO accessions. The Committee expects to address the expiration of key aspects of U.S. trade preference programs and will continue its oversight over the operation of these programs and the Trade Adjustment Assistance programs.

II. The Fiscal Year 2014 Budget

The Committee will review the President's Fiscal Year 2014 Budget upon its release. This review will provide the Committee the opportunity to assess the effectiveness of the President's budget in promoting job creation and economic growth, reducing budget deficits and debt, and ensuring the long term sustainability of programs within the Committee's jurisdiction.

III. Public Debt Limit

The current statutory public debt limit already is now greater than the gross domestic product of the United States. While the Committee recognizes its responsibility to ensure that the United States meets all its obligations, the current growth of the national debt is not sustainable. Current debt levels are already a threat to economic growth and unless action is taken, the projected increase in the national debt will threaten the economic foundation of the country. Thus the Committee intends to pursue policies to slow and ultimately reverse the growth in the national debt and prevent the need for future increases in the statutory debt limit

The Committee on Ways and Means looks forward to working with the Committee on the Budget as we promote prosperity, opportunity, security, and fiscal prudence.

Sincerely,

DAVE CAMP
Chairman